

Chapter 1 : The Theology of Worship in the Reformed Tradition

A Reformed Theology of Worship Paper submitted to the th Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America 0. Introduction and background. 2 Contemporary perspectives on worship 2.

Covenant theology Reformed theologians use the concept of covenant to describe the way God enters fellowship with people in history. Because Adam and Eve broke the covenant by eating the forbidden fruit , they became subject to death and were banished from the garden. This sin was passed down to all mankind because all people are said to be in Adam as a covenantal or "federal" head. Federal theologians usually infer that Adam and Eve would have gained immortality had they obeyed perfectly. In it, God graciously offers salvation from death on condition of faith in God. This covenant is administered in different ways throughout the Old and New Testaments, but retains the substance of being free of a requirement of perfect obedience. Barth saw the covenant of works as disconnected from Christ and the gospel, and rejected the idea that God works with people in this way. Instead, Barth argued that God always interacts with people under the covenant of grace, and that the covenant of grace is free of all conditions whatsoever. Michael Horton , however, has defended the covenant of works as combining principles of law and love. God in Christianity and Trinity For the most part, the Reformed tradition did not modify the medieval consensus on the doctrine of God. God is affirmed to be one God in three persons: Father , Son , and Holy Spirit. Drawing on the Eastern tradition, these Reformed theologians have proposed a " social trinitarianism " where the persons of the Trinity only exist in their life together as persons-in-relationship. According to Russell, thinking this way encourages Christians to interact in terms of fellowship rather than reciprocity. Christ , Hypostatic union , Extra calvinisticum , Substitutionary atonement , and Threefold office Reformed theologians affirm the historic Christian belief that Christ is eternally one person with a divine and a human nature. Reformed Christians have especially emphasized that Christ truly became human so that people could be saved. Because Lutherans believe that Christ is bodily present in the Eucharist , they hold that Christ is bodily present in many locations simultaneously. For Reformed Christians, such a belief denies that Christ actually became human. Faith is personified as a woman to the right of a naked man on the ground asking Christ the way of salvation. They have, however, often reinterpreted the meaning of each of the offices. Christ is believed to have died in place of the believer, who is accounted righteous as a result of this sacrificial payment. Christian views on sin and Total depravity In Christian theology, people are created good and in the image of God but have become corrupted by sin , which causes them to be imperfect and overly self-interested. This view, that sin so dominates people that they are unable to avoid sin, has been called total depravity. These theologians have sought to bring attention to issues of environmental, economic, and political justice as areas of human life that have been affected by sin.

Chapter 2 : Reformation Worship Conference

The Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century was an effort to reform the theology, worship, and polity of the church according to scripture and the customs of the ancient church.

Robert Godfrey One of the challenges of being Reformed in America is to figure out the relationship between what is evangelical and what is Reformed. Protestantism in America is dominated by the mainline Protestants, the evangelicals, and the charismatics. After these dominant groups, other major players would include the confessional Lutherans. But where do the Reformed fit in, particularly in relation to the evangelicals, with whom historically we have been most closely linked? Some observers argue that the confessional Reformed are a subgroup in the broader evangelical movement. Certainly over the centuries in America, the Reformed have often allied themselves with the evangelicals, have shared much in common with the evangelicals, and have often tried to refrain from criticizing the evangelical movement. But are we Reformed really evangelical? One area in which the differences between evangelical and Reformed can be examined is the matter of worship. At first glance, we may see more similarities than differences. The orders of worship in Reformed and evangelical churches can be almost identical. But do these similarities reflect only formal agreement, or do they represent a common understanding of the meaning and function of these liturgical acts in worship? If we look closely, I believe that we will see the substantive differences between evangelicals and Reformed on worship. That difference is clear on two central issues: Do we not both believe that God is present with his people in worship? But how is God present, and how is he active in our worship? It seems to me that for evangelicalism, God is present in worship basically to listen. He is not far away; rather, he is intimately and lovingly present to observe and hear the worship of his people. He listens to their praise and their prayers. He sees their obedient observance of the sacraments. He hears their testimonies and sharing. He attends to the teaching of his Word, listening to be sure that the teaching is faithful and accurate. The effect of this sense of evangelical worship is that the stress is on the horizontal dimension of worship. The sense of warm, personal fellowship, and participation among believers at worship is crucial. Anything that increases a sense of involvement, especially on the level of emotions, is likely to be approved. The service must be inspiring and reviving, and then God will observe and be pleased. The Reformed faith has a fundamentally different understanding of the presence of God. God is indeed present to hear. He listens to the praise and prayers of his people. But he is also present to speak. God is not only present as an observer; he is an active participant. He speaks in the Word and in the sacraments. As Reformed Christians, we do not believe that he speaks directly and immediately to us in the church. God uses means to speak. But he speaks truly and really to us through the means that he has appointed for his church. The sacraments are much more about him than about us. He speaks through them the reality of the presence of Jesus to bless his people as he confirms his gospel truth and promises through them. The effect of this understanding of Reformed worship is that the stress is on the vertical dimension of worship. The horizontal dimension is not absent, but the focus is not on warm feelings and sharing. Rather, it is on the community as a unit meeting their God. Our primary fellowship with one another is in the unified activities of speaking to God in song and prayer and of listening together as God speaks to us. The vertical orientation of our worship service insures that God is the focus of our worship. We must meet with God only in ways that please him. The awe and joy that is ours in coming into the presence of the living God to hear him speak is what shapes and energizes our worship service. The Ministerial Office in Worship The difference between the Reformed faith and evangelicalism on the presence of God in worship is closely tied to their differences on the ministerial office in worship. For evangelicalism, the ministers seem to be seen as talented and educated members of the congregation, called by God to leadership in planning and teaching. The ministers use their talents to facilitate the worship of the congregation and instruct the people. The ministers are not seen as speaking distinctively for God or having a special authority from God. Rather, their authority resides only in the reliability of their teaching, which would be true for any member of the congregation. The effect of this evangelical view of office is to create a very democratic character to worship, in which the participation of many members of the congregation in leading the service is a good thing. The

more who can share, the better. The many gifts that God has given to members of the congregation should be used for mutual edification. Again, the horizontal dimension of worship has prevailed. The Reformed view of ministerial office is quite different. The minister is called by God through the congregation to lead worship by the authority of his office. He is examined and set apart to represent the congregation before God and to represent God before the congregation. In the great dialogue of worship, he speaks the Word of God to the people and he speaks the words of the people to God, except in those instances when the congregation as a whole raises its voice in unison to God. We who are Reformed do not embrace this arrangement because we are antidemocratic or because we believe that the minister is the only gifted member of the congregation. We follow this pattern because we believe that it is biblical and the divinely appointed pattern of worship. The effect of this view of office is to reinforce the sense of meeting with God in a reverent and official way. It also insures that those who lead public worship have been called and authorized for that work by God. The Reformed are rightly suspicious of untrained and unauthorized members of the congregation giving longer or shorter messages to the congregation. In worship we gather to hear God, not the opinions of members. The vertical dimension of worship remains central. Conclusion The contrast that I have drawn between evangelical and Reformed worship no doubt ought to be nuanced in many ways. I have certainly tried to make my points by painting with a very broad brush. Yet the basic analysis, I believe, is correct. One great difficulty that we Reformed folk have in thinking about worship is that our worship in many places has unwittingly been accommodated to evangelical ways. If we are to appreciate our Reformed heritage in worship and, equally importantly, if we are to communicate its importance, character, and power to others, we must understand the distinctive character of our worship. Our purpose in making this contrast so pointed is not to demean evangelicals. They are indeed our brethren and our friends. But we do have real differences with them. If Reformed worship is not to become as extinct as the dinosaurs, we as Reformed people must come to a clear understanding of it and an eager commitment to it. In order to do that, we must see not just formal similarities, but more importantly the profound theological differences that distinguish evangelical worship from Reformed worship. This article, slightly edited, first appeared in *The Outlook*. He quotes the RSV. Reprinted from *New Horizons* , April

Chapter 3 : Calvinism - Wikipedia

Evaluating and choosing music for Christian worship should be a careful process, guided primarily by theological considerations. Pastors, consistories, musicians, choir directors, and worship committees may be aided in this process by being attentive to the following suggested guidelines.

General principles and historical overview[edit] The Huguenot Temple de Lyon Huldrych Zwingli , who began his reforming work in Zurich in , introduced many radical changes to worship. His Sunday service, instituted in , was apparently derived from a liturgy called Prone , a late Medieval service which was sometimes held before, during, or after mass. He limited worship to preaching , almsgiving , the Eucharist , and prayer. John Oecolampadius , in Basel , believed that while the Bible did not give detailed liturgical instruction, all worship must be guided by biblical principles. For him this meant that worship should be simple and unpretentious. The service was also very didactic, with even the prayers written with the intention to instruct. Following to the Union of the Crowns in , the English made several attempts to impose the Book of Common Prayer on the Scots, which they fiercely resisted. They also favored liturgical decisions to be made at the lowest level possible, rather than by a regional or national authority. Reformed baptismal theology In the years leading up to the Reformation, baptism was often conducted in private as a celebration of the birth of children. The rite was considered necessary for salvation, and so midwives often baptized children to avoid the risk that the child would die unbaptized. The parents of children were to bring their children to the font following the sermon, and were admonished to catechize their children, a process which was intended to begin around age ten. He, or possibly Oecolampadius, can be credited with first articulating this line of thought, later called covenant theology , which became the Reformed sacramental theology. This was based on a theology of decisional regeneration , the teaching that only those who had made a decision for Christ could be saved. Against this, the Reformed believed that justification is only by grace, rather than based on any human decision. Confirmation was abolished, but as in Strasbourg children were expected to make a public profession of faith when able, and this became the standard rite of passage for children to be admitted to communion in Reformed churches. Congregationalist minister Horace Bushnell led a return to earlier understandings of baptism and catechesis. Pierre Cathedral , where John Calvin preached Rather than preaching on the appointed gospel , as was the common practice at the time Zwingli preached through consecutive books of the Bible, [1] a practice known as lectio continua which he learned from reading the sermons of John Chrysostom. This practice was also instituted in Wittenburg, Zurich, Basel, and Constance. Catechesis for young and old ensured that what was heard was understood. Congregational prayers were long and theologically weighty.

Chapter 4 : WorshipTraining A Reformed Theology Of Worship - WorshipTraining

1. *A Brief Theology and Philosophy of Worship. University Reformed Church. There is nothing more important in life than worship. We all worship something or someone.*

While a very true statement, it is not a complete one. As a result, the common people were able to gain a fuller and growing comprehension of the greatness of their salvation, and even more importantly, the greatness of their Savior God. In the power of the Holy Spirit, the two together: When we gather as the people of God, the aim should not be to keep as many people happy as possible but that our worship be pleasing to Him. He does not receive all worship. Some worship is corrupt and greatly displeases Him. So what kind of worship does in fact please Him? How can we know for sure? This song expresses the heart of the converted soul: Allow me to give you an example of protocol as it relates to interaction with the Queen. At Buckingham Palace, in London, should you be given the privilege of an invitation to have an audience with her Majesty, you cannot just walk in to the Palace unannounced. A time and date is scheduled. Bear in mind that it is highly offensive to be late for your meeting. Before the actual audience takes place, you would be escorted into a room where for several minutes a Palace official will explain correct procedure and protocol. These include the following: When the Queen enters a room, all in attendance are to stand. Men are to bow, women are to curtsy U. Should you be eating a meal with the Queen in attendance, when the Queen stops eating, all others should stop eating also. Regarding shaking hands, you must wait until the Queen extends her hand towards you. You are not to initiate contact offering a handshake. Definitely, there are to be no hugs, kisses on the cheek or the touching of the shoulder. In conversation, allow her Majesty to initiate any conversation with you. Never, for any reason, turn your back on the Queen. If this is the protocol for interaction with an earthly ruler, what does the Bible say regarding protocol for God Himself, the King of kings and Lord of lords? Sometimes we can lose the wonder and the awe of the fact that we can worship God at all - that we are welcomed into His presence. We must understand that our only access to be able to come before God is through Christ - The Worship Leader. Also included is a reading of The Lorica Breastplate , a prayer of protection traditionally attributed to Saint Patrick of Ireland. The first verse is a petition for inward renewal as we are confronted with the living and written Word of God. The second verse is a prayer that the outward fruit of our lives will reflect Christ in every action. Bring the presence of the risen Lord To renew my heart and make me whole. Holy Spirit, breathe new life in me. Turn my striving into works of grace. Breath of God, show Christ in all I do. Let the fragrance of our prayers arise. Lead us on the road of sacrifice That in unity the face of Christ Will be clear for all the world to see. I thought this was profound: From the WorshipGod conference, C. So you prefer the disorganized kind? Usually most people have not thought about the matter to any great degree. Yet, if we were to understand that WE and our feelings and opinions are not what matters on this issue - that we are not the center of the universe and in fact, that God has the right to orchestrate worship as He sees fit.. I know, what a concept!! Remember Cain and Abel? Remember that His instructions had to be followed precisely and meticulously? Entire books of the Bible were dedicated to revealing His precise instructions. God is holy and is to be treated as such by those seeking to approach Him in worship. Failure to do so had severe consequences. Nadab and Abihu were struck dead by God for seeking to design their own methods of worship. After their deaths, no one in Israel including Aaron their own father was allowed to even mourn their loss Leviticus Chapter It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. Actually, its meant to be. It is a fearful thing to come before God in worship. All of us will be consumed if we do not come His way, on His terms, and by means of the sacrifice He has authorized. Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God. What is a true Church in Your eyes? What is Your view of worship? And really, what is a more historically Reformed practice than psalm-singing? Simply speaking, the psalms were meant to be sung. One group I came across some time ago, which has been a huge blessing to me, is the Sons of Korah. They put a modern, non-metrical translation of the psalms to music. Their songs are exclusively psalms, quite often psalms in their entirety, set to emotional, affective music which reflects the content of the individual psalms very appropriately. They already have five full albums available, with a sixth coming out anytime now. I would

highly recommend them to anyone. Their website is [sonsofkorah](http://sonsofkorah.com). Here is a live version, with lyrics added: As they entered the dreaded arena they had only to say two words and they could live: Kaiser Kurios - Caesar is Lord. The early Christians followed Christ, not out of mere preference, but out of conviction. Can we say the same thing? I found it very moving. Let me know what you think. Ann has posted a sort of a response to criticisms she has received, in which she quotes men like John Piper, C. That is why I want to be ready to give them an answer. What are your thoughts? Would you consider writing a post explaining what Edwards and Spurgeon meant when they used these words? My response can be found [here](#). Properly understood, they lead every true child of God to new depths of worship of our great God. I have been moved to tears many times as I have contemplated the words. This song below called simply "Beautiful" sung by Kari Jobe captures the heart cry of every true child of God. Perhaps no song captures the heart of reformed theology better than the classic hymn "Amazing Grace" by John Newton. Indeed 'twas grace that taught my heart to fear I was sent this link today and in playing it, found it to be deeply moving. Have your sound turned up, click on the link [here](#) and enjoy! It is a 3 hour drive from Portland and a badly needed getaway from our daily routine. My wife and I both love the meat-filled pastries the best and we ate a couple while we enjoyed the rare sunny afternoon on the park bench overlooking the water. It was really a blessing to sit in the sun after a solid month of grey skies. We had a lot to be thankful for. We were excited to be there and saw this as an opportunity for a time of refreshment. We were not disappointed. The relationship that God has established with us, freeing us from bondage, is the basis from which we can now serve him and serve others. Our law-keeping flows out of this new gracious, familial relationship that God has initiated. We obey because we are saved, not saved because we obey. I have to emphasize these points because we need constant reminding of them lest we invert the order of the gospel. Today we are going to focus in on the third commandment which teaches us that we are not to misuse the name of our God. We select this commandment because in our individualistic age it is easy to forget that God is sovereign and, therefore, we cannot worship God anyway we choose. Moses read the third commandment as follows: It is hard to say who started it, whether ministers value those things because congregations do, because those are the sorts of things for which they are rewarded by the congregation or vice-versa. Ultimately it does not matter why we do it. What matters is that we do it. These are the status symbols that we covet:

Chapter 5 : Saint Andrew's | Theology of Worship

Reformed worship is religious devotion to God as conducted by Reformed or Calvinistic Christians, including considerable local and national variation, public worship in most Reformed and Presbyterian churches is governed by the Regulative principle of worship.

Reformed worship captures, proclaims, and enacts the gospel. Two somewhat contradictory images might be used to introduce the theology of Reformed worship: Disparate as these images might seem at first glance, both, like the depictions of the worship of the redeemed in the book of Revelation, assume the majesty and the transcendence of God, even in the white simplicity of a New England church. Central to Calvin and his followers was the proclamation of the Word. The Word declared through Scripture and even more than for Luther, stood at the center of worship. God was transcendent, all-powerful: As in the book of Revelation, the Word is Jesus Christ, but Reformed worship partly in reaction to elements of the medieval Mass perceived by Protestants as fanciful eschewed the pageantry of the Revelation worship scenes, though the Christ was still the center and the source of its word. Church historians speak of the passion of people of the Reformation for sermons, and such was indeed the case. To use the metaphor of Dr. It was expected that Communion would be received in both kinds by all repentant worshipers on each occasion of celebration. This would have radically increased the frequency of individual Communion from the prevailing pre-Reformation custom, in which individuals might commune once a year or even less often. Similar compromises seem to have been made by other Reformers as well. When the sacrament was not celebrated, the service ended where the prayer of consecration would have occurred, with a concluding hymn and benediction. In Reformed churches a common loaf was used, broken for their own portions by the worshipers, and a common cup was passed. Many congregations gathered around tables for the reception of the elements, maintaining the aspect of a covenant meal rather than a sacrifice. The Reformers used prayer books of varying degrees of complexity. The prayers of the invocation at the beginning of the service and the great prayer of intercession further along would be from a prayer book; but a time, usually after the sermon, was allotted for free prayer by the minister. Significant differences began to develop by the 17th century between the English-speaking churches of the Reformed family and the Continental ones. The Anglican Puritans were skeptical of liturgy and the English Congregationalists were hostile towards it; but the Scots were political enough to compromise in liturgical matters. This led to significant decline in both liturgy and liturgical theology in Scottish Presbyterianism and its later American forms, as well as in American colonial Puritanism. In contrast, descendants of Continental Reformed churches in North America stayed closer to their Calvinistic roots, although some of their more evangelical offshoots tended to adopt Puritan anti-liturgical practices. Advent and Lent were generally discouraged by the Reformers as being non-Biblical. Their penitential slant appeared too close to a doctrine of salvation by works and the possibility of pre-Reformation abuses to which such a theology had given rise. Early Reformed worship encouraged the historic three lessons Old Testament, Epistle, and Gospel, usually with several sung psalms. While some lectionaries were used, a more primary emphasis gradually became reading and preaching through a complete book at a time or three books concurrently, as above. Since the preacher might want to spend longer on one passage than another, the result was the decline of set lectionaries, allowing greater expository freedom to the individual minister. Scripture was all inspired by God, of course, but little time was generally spent on the more arcane or tribal portions of books like Leviticus and Numbers. The progression through one or more books of the Bible would be interrupted for church holidays or other occasional major events in the life of the community. No other major Christian tradition can compare with the richness of the use of Sunday by the Reformed, Presbyterian and Puritan traditions which would have decried our modern Sabbath excursions to shopping malls, professional sporting events, and weekend resorts. John Knox Press,] , cites five essentials of this worship: The Reformed understanding of baptism redeveloped the biblical and Augustinian sense of covenant. Baptism is not the final step in sanctification, completing a longer period of catechumenate, as happened at various times in church history and as the Anabaptists wished to restore. Growth in holiness following baptism was expected, from the grace of this covenant relation with

Christ. All the Reformers developed thorough and theologically incisive catechisms for this purpose. Baptism as a covenant of the family of Christ was always to be done in a service of public worship. It was a continuation of the Old Testament covenant of circumcision. The Holy Spirit was truly given in the baptism, which was seen as a sign and symbol of something present, not something absent. No other anointing, use of oils, etc. The Lord was indeed present with his people in the Supper, but his presence was not narrowly localized in the bread and the wine. Again, the Supper was a covenant sign of his presence, not merely a memory of something or someone absent. It was to be celebrated, however, as simply and directly as Jesus himself did with his disciples. This lessened the sense of mystery of the medieval Mass and the Orthodox liturgies, but it strengthened the sense of the power and presence of the Word known through the Scriptures. One final note can be added concerning trends of the late 20th century, particularly in the Presbyterian Church USA. Perhaps as a result of the ecumenical movement, perhaps as a search for more beauty and mystery and drama in worship, this denomination has sought to recover or redeem some pre-Reformation practices. Some of the suggested variations from past Reformed tradition include anointing with oil at baptism and confirmation for the sick, the renunciation of evil in the baptismal service, and certain other phraseological or liturgical actions which most of the early leaders of the Reformed tradition had rejected. Have you completed this media item? Worshipedia Your one stop digital library of worship resources. Rediscover the richness of worship that is Biblically sound, historically connected, and spiritually directed. Worshipedia is a large and growing resource with broad applications for all individual believers, students of worship, artists and musicians, worship leaders, and ministers at all levels of service.

Chapter 6 : Reformed worship - Wikipedia

The Theology of Worship in the Reformed Tradition. This is a syllabus for a study of prominent theological writings from the Reformed tradition on nature and purpose of public worship.

Chapter 7 : Ecclesiology and Worship at calendrierdelascience.com

Each time the people gathered to worship God, with on purpose thought behind it, each element of the Reformed worship service was intentionally devised to reveal both Law and Gospel - the reality and consequences of our sin and the perfect work of the perfect Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter 8 : Worshiping God's Way, Not Ours | Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals

The annual conference will seek to draw gifted scholars and pastors who are able to lead pastors, elders, seminarians, music directors / musicians, and congregants to a fuller understanding of the theology and practice of REFORMED WORSHIP.

Chapter 9 : Doxology & Theology > Worship Reformed

Reformed - The Church has been thinking about how to worship for centuries. We want to learn from our spiritual ancestors and build on their models. We want to learn from our spiritual ancestors and build on their models.